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(56) Documents Cited

**EP 0577284 A2 EP 0360373 A1 WO 95/04689 A1
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(54) MILK AND GAS CONTAINING BEVERAGE

(57) A milk containing beverage containing a dissolved gas is arranged in a pressurised beverage container. When the container is broached and the beverage poured out dissolved gas comes out of solution to form a dispersion of bubbles in the beverage. This may produce a milk-shake like effect. The gas may be nitrous oxide; the beverage may be flavoured and/or contain alcohol and may have a fat content of 7%-12%.

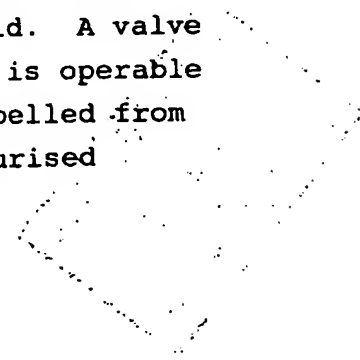
GB 2 299 978 A

1 "Beverage, Method of producing a beverage, and a
2 product containing a beverage"

3
4 This invention relates to a beverage, a method of
5 producing a beverage and a product containing a
6 beverage, all related particularly, but not
7 exclusively, to a dispersion of bubbles caused by a
8 dissolved gas coming out of solution in the beverage.

9
10 The production of a dispersion of bubbles in a beverage
11 so as to confer a foamy or frothy texture is
12 advantageous in some beverages, for example milk
13 shakes, which are more appealing to the consumer in a
14 frothy state. Other advantages may also be gained, for
15 example a reduced volume of liquid may produce a given
16 volume of frothy beverage.

17
18 US Patent No 3,615,718 discloses a method for the
19 production of solid ice cream and ice milk by expelling
20 an aqueous composition of water and milk proteins from
21 an aerosol container pressurized with a propellant gas.
22 The composition is passed through a restricted orifice
23 in the nozzle of the container, and the resultant
24 agitation produces a dispersion of bubbles in the
25 composition resulting in a whipped up solid. A valve
26 is required at the restricted orifice and is operable
27 to allow some of the composition to be expelled from
28 the container, whilst maintaining a pressurised
29 condition within the container.



1 According to a first aspect of the present invention
2 there is provided a method of producing a dispersion of
3 bubbles in a milk-containing beverage, the method
4 comprising dissolving a gas in the beverage, sealing
5 the beverage and dissolved gas in a broachable
6 container, allowing pressure to be induced within the
7 container and broaching the container to release the
8 pressure therein, such that upon dispensing the
9 beverage, at least some of the dissolved gas comes out
10 of solution to form the dispersion of bubbles in the
11 beverage.

12

13 Preferably the gas is dissolved in the beverage under
14 pressure.

15

16 An advantage gained by the present invention is that
17 the beverage does not need to be expelled at high speed
18 through an orifice in order to generate the dispersion
19 of bubbles.

20

21 The dispersion of bubbles may produce a frothy, milk-
22 shake like effect.

23

24 According to a second aspect of the present invention
25 there is provided a product comprising a pressurised
26 beverage container containing a pressurised milk
27 containing beverage in which the beverage has a gas
28 dissolved therein and in which at least a portion of
29 the dissolved gas is arranged to come out of solution
30 to form a dispersion of bubbles in the beverage when
31 the beverage is dispensed.

32

33 A portion of the dissolved gas may be arranged to come
34 out of solution when the container is opened or
35 broached.

36

1 Preferably, the beverage is of low-medium viscosity.
2 The beverage may contain at least 85% milk, preferably
3 at low-medium viscosity.

4
5 The gas may be, for example, N₂O, HFC or HCFC.
6 The gas may comprise or include carbon dioxide.
7 However, the properties of carbon dioxide may make it
8 less desirable than the aforementioned gases. Carbon
9 dioxide imparts a sharpness of flavour to milk which is
10 not usually desirable in products of this type. In
11 addition its slight acidity can alter the properties of
12 the milk proteins and cause coagulation and separation
13 of the solids. This latter aspect can be rectified by
14 the addition of buffering agents and stabilizers but
15 the overall effect does not enhance the product.

16
17 A mixture of gasses or a mixture of any of the
18 aforementioned gasses may be used. The beverage may be
19 saturated or supersaturated with the gas or gasses.
20 Bubbles of gas may be suspended in the beverage before
21 and/or after broaching of the container.

22
23 One or more flavourings may be added to or included in
24 the beverage, for example, chocolate, fruit flavours,
25 malt, coconut, vanilla, coffee, orange, banana.

26
27 The container is optimally broached at a temperature of
28 between 2°C and 10°C. The container may be in the form
29 of a can, bottle, carton or other openable package
30 capable of withstanding pressure. The container may be
31 non-reusable. Broaching the container may expose its
32 entire contents to atmospheric pressure. Alternatively,
33 the container may be a barrel; it may have an external
34 pressure source. It may be arranged to allow
35 withdrawal or dispensing of a portion of its contents
36 whilst maintaining pressure on the beverage retained in

1 the container.

2

3 The beverage may optionally contain alcohol or an
4 alcoholic beverage, preferably a spirit, for example,
5 vodka, gin, or whisky or a liqueur; it may have
6 additional flavourings which may advantageously be
7 incorporated into the alcoholic beverage, for example,
8 a fruit or mint liqueur. Where the beverage contains
9 alcohol, or an alcoholic beverage, the alcohol is
10 preferably present in a quantity of at least 1% by
11 volume of the beverage. The beverage may contain up to
12 20% alcohol by volume. A greater proportion of alcohol
13 may be used if desired.

14

15 An important optional feature of the invention is that
16 the dispersion of bubble in the beverage may be
17 enhanced when the beverage is dispensed from the
18 container. Preferably, the beverage does not increase
19 substantially in volume whilst in the container, and is
20 not therefore inclined to overflow from the container.

21

22 According to a third aspect of the present invention
23 there is provided a beverage comprising a milk base
24 containing nitrous oxide gas dissolved in the milk base
25 and also comprising alcohol.

26

27 Alcohol may be contained in the beverage, preferably
28 above 1% by volume and preferably up to 20% by volume.

29

30 The beverage may be contained in a pressurised
31 container wherein the nitrous oxide causes dispersion
32 of bubbles within the beverage on being poured from the
33 container.

34

35 Alternatively, the beverage may be dispensed from a
36 tap, wherein the nitrous oxide causes dispersion of

1 bubbles within the beverage on being poured from the
2 tap.

3

4 According to a fourth aspect of the present invention
5 there is provided a beverage comprising a milk base and
6 having nitrous oxide gas dissolved in the milk base,
7 wherein the beverage is maintained under pressure until
8 ready for consumption.

9

10 The beverage may be maintained under pressure in a
11 broachable beverage can. Alternatively, the beverage
12 may be maintained under pressure in a storing means for
13 dispersing from a tap.

14

15 Ingredients in the beverage may include, for example,
16 any one or any combination of the following:

17

- 18 i) Any substance suitable for use as a food or
19 commonly used as a food
- 20 ii) Flavouring
- 21 iii) Colouring, emulsifier, stabiliser, sweetener or
22 miscellaneous additive
- 23 iv) Starch (modified or not)
- 24 v) Salt
- 25 vi) Vitamin or mineral preparation, for example,
26 Vitamin D
- 27 vii) Water
- 28 viii) Chocolate
- 29 ix) Fruit
- 30 x) Vegetable fat
- 31 xi) Milk Solids not fat (MSNF)
- 32 xii) Cream
- 33 xiii) Stabiliser
- 34 xiv) Milk powder
- 35 xv) Milk
- 36 xvi) alcohol

1 The fat content of the beverage may be important in
2 producing the desired effect. Preferably, the beverage
3 contains substantially between 7% and 12% fat. Where a
4 milk base is used, the milk base may contain
5 substantially between 0%-4% fat; the fat content of
6 chocolate used may vary between about 25% to 35%.

7

8 Embodiments of the present invention will now be
9 described, by way of example only.

10

11 The following are a number of alternative basic recipes
12 for a base mixture of a milk containing beverage.

13

14 1 Full fat milk 86.9%; dairy milk chocolate 8.5%;
15 plain chocolate 4.5%; stabiliser 0.05% to 0.2%,
16 for example, Alginates, Xanthans, Carrageenin or
17 mixtures thereof).

18

19 2 For thin liquid mixture: 92% skimmed milk; 7.9%
20 milk chocolate; 0.1% stabiliser or alternatively,
21 90% full fat milk; 2% plain chocolate; 7.9% milk
22 chocolate; 0.1% stabiliser.

23

24 3 For a mixture of average thickness: 87% full fat
25 milk; 4.9% plain chocolate; 8% milk chocolate;
26 0.1% stabiliser or alternatively, 87% full fat
27 milk; 12.9% white chocolate; 0.1% stabiliser.

28

29 4 For a thick consistency of mixture: 85% whole
30 milk; 4.9% white chocolate; 8% milk chocolate; 2%
31 cornflour; 0.1% stabiliser or alternatively, 85%
32 whole milk; 4.9% plain chocolate; 8% milk
33 chocolate; 2% coffee creamer; 0.1% stabiliser.

34

35 Typically, stabiliser or stabilisers may be included in
36 a quantity of 0.05% to 0.2%.

1 All the measurements given in these ingredients are
2 percentage by weight. The beverages are in liquid form
3 with a viscosity similar to single cream unlike known
4 compositions containing Nitrous Oxide which are frozen
5 or solid products. The viscosity of the beverage of
6 the invention varies with temperature but is generally
7 a medium viscosity liquid.

8
9 The following method is used to form the mixture. The
10 chocolate solid is supplied or broken down into
11 granular form and mixed with half of the milk used in
12 the recipe in a mixing tank. The term milk is used to
13 encompass all types of milk and milk like products and,
14 in particular, full fat, whole, skimmed and UHT milk.
15 The temperature is raised whilst stirring to at least
16 50°C until all the chocolate is melted and dispersed.
17 This takes several minutes. The second half of the
18 milk is mixed cold with the stabiliser and stirred
19 until the stabiliser is fully dissolved. The two milk
20 portions are then combined and cooled to a temperature
21 of between 0 and 3°C.

22
23 The cooled milk is supersaturated with gas by injecting
24 and metering gas under pressure of around 80psi. This
25 can be done in a variety of ways which are well
26 established in the beverage industries. For example,
27 when transferring the product from the mixing tank to
28 a storage tank, gas can be injected into the transfer
29 pipe and a suitable back pressure kept on the receiving
30 tank. Dispersion of the gas is enhanced by pumping the
31 gas/liquid mixture through a plate heat exchanger to
32 increase the contact area and time. Alternatively, gas
33 can be injected at the base of an agitated tank which
34 is held under a predetermined back pressure. A further
35 method is to recirculate the product from a tank
36 through a gas injection system and then return it under

1 pressure to the same tank.

2

3 The gassed beverage is then packaged and quickly sealed
4 by sealing a lid onto the container to avoid loss of
5 the nitrous oxide, or other gas used, from the mixture.

6

7 Pasteurisation is achieved by conventional means, for
8 example, by spraying the containers with hot water.
9 Pasteurisation can be achieved at varying temperatures
10 depending on the length of time the containers are
11 exposed at the given temperature. For example, a
12 container in the form of a can may be raised to a
13 temperature of 70°C for one hour; preferably, less
14 rigorous regimes are employed. The beverage may be
15 flash pasteurised and the containers filled under
16 aseptic conditions. The beverage may be pasteurised in
17 accordance with The Milk Based Drinks (Hygiene and Heat
18 Treatment) (Amendment) Regulations 1986 (1986/720).
19 For example, in-package pasteurisation may be achieved
20 by holding the beverage at a temperature of at least
21 63°C for a minimum of 30 minutes. Alternatively, for
22 aseptic filling the flash pasteurisation conditions may
23 require a holding time of at least 15 seconds at a
24 minimum temperature of 72°C. The product should then
25 be cooled as soon as practicable and retained at a
26 temperature below 10°C.

27

28 The mixture is gassed up with nitrous oxide to a level
29 of between one and four volumes. Gases other than
30 nitrous oxide could be used, for example, HFCs or
31 HCFCs. The addition of nitrous oxide is preferred as
32 it has suitable solubility properties. It is inert and
33 neutral and only imparts of very slight sweetness to
34 the product. The solubility of nitrous oxide in water
35 or milk is enough to produce a good foaming effect
36 under the required temperature and pressure conditions.

1 Typically, two volumes of gas are dissolved in the milk
2 product.

3
4 When the container is broached by opening a closure of
5 the container, for example, a ring pull on a can, the
6 product does not immediately expand such that the
7 container overflows. However, the effect when pouring
8 out the product from the container is dramatic due, it
9 is believed, to agitation and seeding of the bubbles
10 caused by natural, non-forced nucleation of the gas
11 dissolved in the beverage. The product can expand to
12 over double its volume and produce a finely dispersed
13 foam. The foam gradually collapses over a period of
14 time. If the product is left in the container it will
15 tend to expand and creep up slowly as the dissolved gas
16 comes out of solution due to the reduction in pressure.

17
18 The beverage can also be contained in a storage
19 container under pressure and dispensed from a tap, for
20 example at a bar. Preferably, dispersion of the gas
21 only occurs on the pouring of the beverage when the
22 Nitrous Oxide or other gas nucleates.

23
24 In addition, as an optional addition to the
25 ingredients, alcohol can be added to the mixture, for
26 example in the form of vodka. The alcohol may be added
27 to the milk before gassing the milk with nitrous oxide
28 and packaging. Ideally, 5-10% alcohol would be added
29 or up to a maximum of 20%.

30
31 The product may contain preservatives and/or
32 stabilisers to ensure that it remains fresh and/or
33 homogeneous for a desired period of time.

34
35 The product should be dispensed at a temperature above
36 freezing, preferably at a temperature of between 2°C

1 and 10°C.

2

3 Modifications and improvements may be made to the above
4 without departing from the scope of the present
5 invention.

6

1 Claims

2

3 1 A pressurised beverage container containing a
4 pressurised milk containing beverage in which the
5 beverage has a gas dissolved therein and in which
6 at least a portion of the dissolved gas is
7 arranged to come out of solution to form a
8 dispersion of bubbles in the beverage when the
9 beverage is dispensed.

10

11 2 A container in accordance with Claim 1 in which
12 the beverage contains at least 85% milk.

13

14 3 A container in accordance with Claim 1 or Claim 2
15 in which the dissolved gas comprises nitrous
16 oxide.

17

18 4 A container in accordance with any preceding claim
19 in which the dissolved gas comprises a mixture of
20 gasses.

21

22 5 A container in accordance with any preceding Claim
23 in which the beverage is saturated or super-
24 saturated with the dissolved gas.

25

26 6 A container in accordance with any preceding claim
27 in which the container is broachable and in which
28 bubbles of gas are suspended in the beverage
29 before and/or after broaching of the container.

30

31 7 A container in accordance with any preceding claim
32 in which the container is in the form of a can,
33 bottle or carton.

34

35 8 A container in accordance with any preceding claim
36 in which the beverage contains between 1% and 20%

1 alcohol by volume.

2

3 9 A container in accordance with any preceding claim
4 in which dispersion of bubbles in the beverage is
5 enhanced when the beverage is dispensed from the
6 container.

7

8 10 A container in accordance with any preceding claim
9 in which the beverage does not increase
10 substantially in volume whilst in the container
11 when the container is broached.

12

13 11 A container in accordance with any preceding Claim
14 in which the beverage has a fat content of between
15 7% and 12%.

16

17 12 A method of producing a dispersion of bubbles in a
18 milk containing beverage, the method comprising
19 dissolving a gas in the beverage, sealing the
20 beverage and dissolved gas in a broachable
21 container, allowing pressure to be induced within
22 the container and broaching the container to
23 release the pressure therein, such that upon
24 dispensing the beverage, at least some of the
25 dissolved gas comes out of solution to form the
26 dispersion of bubbles in the beverage.

27

28 13 A beverage substantially as described herein with
29 reference to any one of the given examples.

30



Application No: GB 9607756.5
Claims searched: 1-13

Examiner: Martin Davey
Date of search: 27 June 1996

Patents Act 1977
Search Report under Section 17

Databases searched:

UK Patent Office collections, including GB, EP, WO & US patent specifications, in:
UK CI (Ed.O): B8C ; CWA1
Int CI (Ed.6): B65D
Other: Online:WPI

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Identity of document and relevant passage	Relevant to claims
X	EP 0 577 284 A2 (GUINNESS) See in particular col.1,lines 1 to 15 .	1-12
X	EP 0360 373 A1 (ARTHUR GUINNESS) See in particular col.2,lines 29 to 5 .	1-12
X	WO 95/04689 A1 (SMITHCLINE BEECHAM) See in particular page1,line19 to page2,line23 and page9,lines30 to 32.	1-12
X	WO 93/24384 A1 (COSTELLO & KERSHAW) See in particular page2,lines1 to 64 .	1-12
X	US 4,832,968 (FORAGE) See in particular page1,lines 7 to24 .	1-12

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
&	Member of the same patent family	E	Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.